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ADDRESS TO THE CLERGY

OF

NEW-ENGLAND,

ON THEIR OPPOSITION TO THE RULERS

OF THE

UNITED STATES.

BY A LAYMAN.

William Plumer

"Ye are departed out of the way—ye have caused many to stumble—therefore have I made you contemptible and base before all the people."

MALACHI.



CONCORD, N. H.

PRINTED BY I. AND W. R. HILL.

1814.

PREFACE.

THE subject of the following Address, printed originally in the NEW-HAMPSHIRE PATRIOT, having excited considerable attention, the author is induced to give it a more permanent form than that in which it originally appeared. His object in this address was not to effect any temporary party politics; but to attract the attention of the Clergy to a sense of their real interest, and to a course of conduct comporting with the religion they profess, and to the duty they owe society. He has done this, by exhibiting the impropriety of their mingling with the factions of the times, and the impolicy and wickedness of reviling rulers. He has recited the express and positive injunctions of the *Scriptures* on them, to support, not oppose the civil magistrates, whom God in his providence has placed in authority over them. The exposition of the duties of a christian pastor, deduced from the explicit declarations of Christ and his Apostles, was accompanied and contrasted with the proofs, neither few in number or trivial in character, of a course of conduct deliberately and systematically pursued by many of the Clergy of New-England, directly the reverse of that enjoined by the New Testament.

The conclusion resulting not merely from the reasoning of the author, but from the incontrovertible facts he adduced, was humiliating to a class of men, who, not content with directing our spiritual concerns, are, like the ghostly confessors of other ages and countries, grasping with insatiable avidity at the control of our temporal affairs—at the government of the present as well as future world. This view of their conduct was not exhibited by the Layman to expose them as a spectacle of contempt and derision, but to induce them to return to their duty—that of disseminating moral and religious instruction—a duty for which their order was originally instituted, and the performance of which can alone render it permanently useful and respectable. That no adequate motive might be wanting to such a course of conduct, the Layman after pointing out their duty as clergymen proceeded to lay before them a view of their interest. He proved that they had not only violated the sacred injunctions of religion, but were sacrificing their own ease and safety by attaching themselves to a political party.

We have too much reason to believe it is the design of some of the clergy to procure for themselves a religious establishment, independent of the people. An alliance between Church and State would produce a union fruitful of mischief to both. The Layman has warned them against attempting such a project; it can only be effected by the destruction of religious freedom, and that in a country where above all others it is most highly prized. A country, in which the number and diversity of religious societies are not only numerous, but where all of them enjoy their rights unimpaired to a much greater degree than any nation on earth.

are the doctrines and opinions in the following address to the Clergy on their behalf an elaborate answer has been attempted; most of which is altogether foreign from the subject. The only argument in point,

adduced by that writer, and which, from its frequent use and apparent success with the uninformed, seemed deserving of any reply, has been noticed by the Layman in his last number.

There is another topic usual on such occasions, and which has been resorted to on the present. Whenever the clergy are admonished of their faults, a hue and cry is raised through the land, that "Religion is in danger—the ordinances of God are despised—and the holy things of the church are profaned." From the clamor thus raised against the Layman, one who had not read his address would conclude he had declared hostility against Christianity itself. But he has only attempted, and that in the spirit of friendship, to reclaim the clergy from intermeddling with degrading contentions, about which they are too ignorant to decide, and with which they have no concern. He thinks they ought to be confined to the strict discharge of their *clerical duties*. When thus employed, he would least of all men withhold from them their just share of respect and esteem. But the moment they resign the sacred character—the moment they attempt to fight the battles of *party* with the weapons of religion, he will regard them as every honest man must regard them, with no portion of that respect or affection which the pastoral character so naturally inspires. A clergyman preaching *party politics*, merits less attention than the meanest of his hearers. Before he can submit to become *the tool of party*, he must have lost much of the temper and of the feelings of a minister of the meek Redeemer. If he will wallow in the mire of *factious opposition*, he cannot expect his cassock and band will protect him from the filth and slander which he delights in handling. The Roman Catholic priests of the middle ages often led their flocks to battle, and frequently were most forward in deeds of blood and slaughter. The history of those martial prelates is worthy of the attention of our *modern pulpit warriors*. The Bishop of Beavais was taken prisoner in battle by Richard I. king of England, (himself an enemy to priests) and thrown into prison, loaded with irons. When the Pope demanded his liberty, claiming him as *a son of the church*, the king sent to His Holiness the coat of mail which the bishop had worn in battle, and which was all besmeared with blood, with the words of the sons of Jacob to that patriarch, "This have we found; know now whether it be thy son's coat or no?" It does not appear that the Pope afterwards renewed his demand for that worthy *son of the Church*. Have our Clergymen, in the situation they have placed themselves, any right to expect better treatment? If they are pierced through with many wounds, can they blame any one but themselves?

I cannot omit on this occasion adding a quotation from Mr. BURKE. If the subject required great names in its support, it would be difficult to select one from modern times more eminent. "Politics," says he, "and the pulpit are terms that have little agreement. No sound ought to be heard in the church but the healing voice of christian charity. The cause of civil liberty and civil government gains little as that of religion by this confusion of duties. Those who quit their proper character to assume what does not belong to them, are, for the greater part, ignorant both of the character they leave, and of the character they assume. Wholly unacquainted with the world in which they are so fond of meddling, and inexperienced in all its affairs, on which they pronounce with so much confidence, they have nothing of politics but the passions they excite. Surely, the church is a place where one day's truce ought to be allowed to the dissensions and animosities of mankind."

But if the clergy should still pursue a course so contrary both to their duty and interest, there remains only one other remedy to be applied. If

reason and remonstrance prove unavailing, an appeal must be made to the grosser motives. The clergy will be made to feel through their purses the fatal tendency of their preposterous conduct. If they cease to teach religion, the people will cease to support them as religious teachers. In New-Hampshire, this procedure has already commenced. In some towns the people understand their rights on this subject, and will not submit to imposition. Particular clergymen have been made sensible of it—they have quietted their people by concessions and promises of amendment. Let the clergy of New-England beware how they tax the long suffering patience of the people. There is a point of sufferance beyond which the people will not, and ought not to endure.

A LAYMAN.

April 13, 1814.



TO THE
CLERGY OF NEW-ENGLAND.

NO. 1.

REVEREND GENTLEMEN,

I DO not consider a Newspaper as the most proper medium for discussing either the principles or the ceremonies of religion : I shall therefore in this address avoid, as far as I can with propriety, the investigation of either the one or the other. My design is to examine *your conduct* in relation to the civil government and the social and natural rights of our country—to compare your recent practice with that of the clergy of 1775 and 1776; with that of your own in 1797, '8 and '9; and with the positive injunctions of the religion of which you are the professed teachers. As your rank and influence on society on the one hand, demand a course marked with candor and frankness, a respect to our injured country and to myself, equally require on the other, that, like a faithful witness, I should *tell the whole truth*. And as a particular favor, I request that you would with candor and deliberation consider what I write, and *not become my enemy because I tell you the truth*.

It is a fact that cannot be controverted, that a great majority of you for the last twelve years have entered the ranks of opposition against those whom the nation elected both to legislate and to administer their General Government. And since that Government, which is the only tribunal to whom the people have intrusted the power of peace and of war, has by the injustice of Britain been compelled to declare war in vindication of our essential rights, many of you have often repeatedly and publicly declared the war unjust and unnecessary, and that those who engage in it are murderers. You have used every mean in your power to prevent enlistments into the army and subscriptions to loan money to support it—and many of you, without evi-

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dence, have with unblushing effrontery declared, that the Administration of our country was governed by foreign influence.—Some of you from respect to your hearers, or other causes, who have not in your pulpits thus openly reviled your rulers, have not only *almost neglected to pray for them*, but in private circles have given currency to calumny, and insinuated charges of such an evil nature against our rulers, as tended to impair and destroy the confidence of the people in the Government.

After the commencement of the present war, numbers of you applied by letters and memorials to the Governor of this State, requesting him to appoint a fast, that the people might confess their sins to God, and beseech Him to remove the calamity of war with which he was visiting us as a punishment for our transgressions against him. But when the Governor issued the proclamation of the President of the United States, for a fast in August, what was your conduct? What spirit did your prayers and sermons communicate to your hearers? Instead of confessing your transgressions, and those of your parishioners, very many of you devoted your talents on that day in arraigning and condemning our rulers, ascribing their public conduct to wicked and disgraceful motives. You accused them with having neither the fear of God or love of country in their hearts—of being the servile tools and abject slaves of France. If your sole object for that fast was to gain an opportunity to traduce and vilify the government, to counteract and enfeeble its measures, you could not in this State or Massachusetts, acted more in concert than very many of you did. I do not accuse you all as guilty of these seditious practices; I know there were a few honorable exceptions—clergymen who merit the grateful approbation of their country and of posterity. But in a war “for the freedom of commerce and Sailor’s rights,” it was natural to have expected every clergyman, who was animated with *love of country*, would have fervently prayed God to bless our arms, *teach our hands to fight and our fingers to war*—that union might bind all our hearts in the common cause, and a firm resolution to conquer, nerve every arm for victory. He is an enemy, or at most a lukewarm friend, who wavers in the cause of his country. He is a timid shepherd who deserts his sheep when the wolf appears—such

a man ought not to be trusted. The Master, whom you profess to serve, declared, and the truth of his declaration is confirmed by the experience of ages, *he that is not for us is against us.*

The clergymen of New-England, your predecessors of 1775 and '6, in the time of our revolutionary war, adopted a manly course of conduct, directly the reverse of yours. Their time, their talents, both in public and private, were directed to the cause of their country. They cordially supported the measures of our government—they were the active friends to the suffering soldiers, and inimical to none but the *enemies* of their country.

I readily admit, that the state of the country previous to the revolution created an interest to clergymen different from yours. Episcopacy was then the established religion, though all other sectaries were tolerated. Under our colonial government, it seems to have been considered necessary that our governors, counsellors and judges should belong to Episcopal societies. This circumstance alarmed the fears of Congregational and Presbyterian clergymen; but the revolution, whilst it nearly extinguished Episcopacy in New-England, gave great and increasing importance to the two other sects. Fortunately the interest of dissenting clergymen and that of their country *then* united.

But in your times, you have had nothing to fear from Episcopacy; but much from numerous sectaries who pervade the country. Civil liberty was not the only blessing of the Revolution—ecclesiastical freedom followed it. Our Constitution has established perfect liberty to every man, not only to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, but the right of paying or not paying for the support of religious teachers, as he may judge proper. This *perfect law of liberty* alarmed you—it left you in a state not pleasing to some of you—it left you dependent on your *own merits* and the good will of the people for subsistence. To relieve yourselves from this state of uncertain dependance, many of you have been anxious to obtain a religious establishment—some by open, but more by covert means. In Massachusetts, some of you have publicly avowed the object. The Panoplist of July 1812, contends for the establishment of a permanent tribunal with power to ordain and depose ministers, as they should judge proper—

and in fact establish articles of faith and practice. You have found Republicans the firm and decided friends of equal liberty, and of course opposed to your claims; but by many federalists your pretensions have received countenance: and is not this in fact the cause why you have attached yourselves to them as political partizans, and rallied round their standard in opposition to the government of your country? Is this cause worthy of your character? Is it consonant with the spirit of that religion, which requires you to be subject to every ordinance of the civil authority for conscience sake?

A LAYMAN.

December 6, 1813.

N^O. 2.

REVEREND GENTLEMEN,

HAVING in my former number shewn that your conduct to the government of the United States is altogether at variance with that of your predecessors of 1775 and '6; I now proceed to compare it with your own conduct in 1797, '8 and 9. In doing this, I cannot pursue a course more unexceptionable, or more conclusive, than by comparing and examining the writings and declarations of some of the most eminent of your profession in these two periods of time. I shall confine myself principally to Dr. *Osgood* of Medford, and Dr. *Parish* of Byfield, both of Massachusetts. You cannot accuse me of selecting men of feeble intellect—destitute of learning—or men who had not the means of information within their power. They are men, I believe, whom you, in general, consider as *leaders*—men whose sentiments you adopt, and whose conduct a great majority of you approve.

I need not inform you that some portion of the time from 1797 to 1799 the United States was at war with France. It is not however my intention, at this time, to discuss either the justice or policy of that war; but to present the doctrines that your leaders then advocated, that you and the world may see how materially different they were from the doctrines they have recently inculcated.

In May 1798, Dr. Osgood, in behalf of the Convention of Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts, signed an address to the President of the United States, in which they say, "We remember his [Christ's] command to forgive and love our most injurious enemies. But neither the law of Christianity nor of reason requires us to prostrate our national independence, freedom, prosperity and honor at the feet of proud, insatiable oppressors. Such a prostration would be treason against that Being who gave us our inestimable privileges, civil and religious, as a sacred deposit to be defended and transmitted to posterity. It would be criminal unfaithfulness and treachery to our country, our children and the whole human race.

"The intimate connexion between our civil and christian blessings is alone sufficient to justify the decided part which the clergy of America have uniformly taken in supporting the constituted authorities and political interests of their country."

Here we find the Doctor avowing the necessity of defending the independence, freedom and even honor of the nation—that it would be criminal treachery not to transmit them to posterity—and that the clergy have been uniform in supporting the constituted authorities of their country. And in his sermon of the 20th Nov. 1798, he says, "I think it my duty to remind you that of all our political blessings for which we ought on this day, to make our grateful acknowledgements to the divine goodness, our federal government is the greatest, and in fact, the basis of the whole"—(page 16.) But in his sermon of April 8, 1810, he says, "It is known that the character of the present national rulers and the measures which they have adopted are disapproved by the great body of the clergy."—(p. 8) He is not content with simply disapproving the measures of the constituted authorities of his country, but he reviles them, he traduces them, accuses them of crimes of the deepest dye, and exerts his talents and influence not only to excite in the people a spirit of distrust and contempt, but of disobedience to the government of their own choice.

In his discourses he condemns all the measures of our own government, and not only approves but applauds those of our avowed enemy. In the sermon last mentioned, he says, "Had our government afforded proper facility to the

British to recover their deserters, they would not have attacked our frigate" [the Chesapeake.]—(p. 27.)

" Were she [Britain] destroyed, more than half the commerce of the world would perish with her and ALL our privileges and happiness would soon be buried in her tomb."—(p. 37.) But he thanks the Lord—" thou hast poured contempt upon the wrath of man, upon the open hostility of France and the secret covered grudge and malice of the American government, so overruling the French decrees and the American embargoes, devised on purpose for the ruin of Britain, as to render them subservient to the increase of her revenue and the extension of her commerce."—(p. 39.)

" Britain, says he, is a nation of more religion, virtue, good faith, generosity and beneficence than any other that now is or ever has been on earth " But he says " it grieved his soul with anguish to find so great a portion of his fellow-citizens against her."—(p. 40.)

In his sermon of May 21, 1809, speaking of the government of the United States he says, " My prayer to God is that they may be restored to the eye of their reason, freed from their prejudices and partialities which have hitherto permitted them to see only through the eyes of a JEFFERSON."—(p. 9)

In his sermon of April 8, 1810, he says " The people of the United States when they chose Jefferson for their chief ruler, I firmly believe sinned against heaven, in a grievous and aggravated manner.—As a punishment, Almighty God has turned their councils into foolishness."—(p. 20.)

Again he declares, " That Mr. Jefferson and his Administration have dissipated the wealth of the nation, destroyed its commerce—suffered his creatures to plunder the Treasury—and with the heart of a desperado, in contempt of the Constitution, refused to lay the British treaty before the Senate.--(p. 15.) That the measures of Mr. Jefferson were " a most flagrant violation not of the federal Constitution only, but of the first principles which unite men in society, and were a stretch of despotism unparalleled and unexampled in the history of the world : no circumstance attending them, occasioned to my mind more gloomy apprehensions, than to see my fellow citizens so humbled and lost to a sense of their civil rights, the rules of morality, and the laws of God, as to be capable of yielding their necks one moment to such humble impositions."—(p. 16.)

Mr. Madison, he declares, has enlisted himself amongst the prime agents of France—(p. 24) and that our rulers are the timid, mean, servile, abject, submissive, dependent slaves of Bonaparte—(p. 26.) And speaking of the city of Washington where our principal Officers reside, he says, “Beings more malignant and infernal inhabit that city now than were those who dwelt in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah of old.”—(p. 33.)

In his sermon of June 1812, he says, our government have *hardihood and effrontery at which Demons might blush*. (p. 11) “Conscious of their guilt and danger, but destitute as fallen angels of any heart to repent, party spirit and rage have so worked them up, that they have at length become desperate, and in a fit of desperation declared war.”—(p. 14)

This war he says is an “outrage against Heaven, against all truth, honesty, justice, goodness—against all the principles of social happiness. It can be accounted for on no other principle, but the imperceptible influence which worketh in the children of disobedience, has been permitted to exert in the hearts of dark minded, cool, deliberately wicked rulers.”—(p. 12.)

“Were not (says he) the authors of this war in character nearly akin to the Deists and Atheists of France; were they not men of hardened hearts, seared consciences, reprobate minds, and desperate wickedness; it seems utterly inconceivable that they should have made the declaration of war.”—(p. 13.)

Again he says, “Every man who volunteers his services in such a war. [the war against Britain] or loans his money for its support, or by his conversation, his writings, or any other mode of influence, encourages its prosecution, that man is an accomplice in the wickedness; loads his conscience with the blackest crimes, brings the guilt of blood upon his soul, and in the sight of God and his law is a MURDERER---and no murderer hath eternal life.”—(p. 9.)

Not content with anathematizing our government and dooming those who obey its laws to eternal destruction, he grossly misrepresents the sentiments and character of the eastern States. He says “In New-England the war declared cannot be approved by any but here and there a furious party leader, a few ignorant deluded fanatics, and a handful of desperadoes !”---(p. 15.)

How variant are such wanton charges from the spirit of that mild religion, which enjoins on its disciples, to let *their moderation be known to all men---and not to judge other men's servants ?*

A LAYMAN.

December 13, 1813.

N^O. 3.

REVEREND GENTLEMEN,

I NOW proceed to compare and examine Dr. *Parish's* discourses upon government and war in 1799, with his publications of more recent dates. In his oration of the 4th of July, 1799, he says, " It is a time of day that requires cautious jealousy. Not jealousy of your magistrates, for you have given them your confidence, but of those who slander their administration. To be jealous of your rulers would be, as if a person were to choose a bride from all the beauties of the world, and then instantly, without cause, be jealous of her alone. Your public characters are your OWN CHOICE.--- Watch these ungrateful souls, who *murmur about taxation and oppression*, the burdens of government and religion. They have fellowship with our enemies---they are traitors to God and christianity. Be jealous of those, who declaim against alien and sedition laws ; they probably, have a hankering for *lying and rebellion* themselves. In a word, let honest men, let the friends of God and humanity, spurn from their embrace every man, who trifles with his father's religion, the hope and salvation of the world ; *who alarms weak minds with designs of government* ; who discourages the most formidable means of defence. It was the sword which gave courage to declare *Independence*. Such is the present state of human nature, that nothing but the sword can defend our *Independence*. Never, never while there is a crimson drop in your hearts will you suffer an armed foe to breathe your native air. " Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood ; let him that hath none, sell his coat and buy one. --The contest is desirable."

Here this good doctor with the zeal of a patriot, strenuously exhorts his fellow-citizens, to repose unbounded confidence in their rulers, *because they elected them ; to be jeal-*

ous of those only *who slander the administration* ; to watch those *who murmured* against taxation, for they are men in fellowship with our enemies and traitors to God ; to spurn from their embrace those who accuse the government with designs, and discourage the means of defence ; and urging him that hath no sword to sell his coat and buy one. But what was his language from 1810 to 1813 of our rulers, men elected by the free suffrages of a free people ? and what his declarations of a war constitutionally declared by these rulers ? Let his own words answer the questions ; but in reciting them I may tax both your patience and feelings, if any feelings you have for the country he degrades.

In his sermon of May 30, 1810, speaking of our national rulers he says, " The heralds of the general government have passed through our towns ; like the messengers of Job, each had a tale more affecting than his fellow. They have passed along ; before them was the garden of Eden, a virtuous people obedient to the laws. Behind them is the desert of Sodom, violations of law, perjury and distress. Terrific architects of ruin, can they exult in their tremendous power of annihilation ?"---(p. 18.)

He compares our rulers to Pharaoh and to Judas.---(p. 19.) In his sermon of April 11, 1811, he says, Our government have published false and treacherous proclamations---(p. 23.) Speaking of Congress he says, " Why did the majority of our Legislators perjure themselves, when they had sworn to support the constitution ? Why did they knowingly violate that article, which declares that no *ex post facto* law shall be made ?"---(p. 25.)

He says our " Vessels have been seized by an unconstitutional law never published. Blush Algiers, blush ye Neros of the world. Ye are outrivalled in the science of despotism. This is the government, prating about impartiality and equal justice to all nations ; this is the government, which embargoes the produce of your farms ; this is the government, which makes laws to punish honest deeds, performed long before the law existed ; this is the government, which cuts off all intercourse with the only nation, which protects your property and lives ; this is the government, which harmonizes with DEVILS."---(p. 25 and 26.)

" If we come down to the state governments, we find the same intolerant, treacherous and tyrannical temper."---(p. 26.)

In his sermon of April 8, 1813, he says the chief magistrate Madison, "is the angel of wrath, dashing in the dust the richest comforts of the people, extinguishing the spirit of exertion, filling the land with devastation and misery." He compares the President to the Devil, and says Congress has "established iniquity and murder by law."---(p. 9.) Speaking of the conduct of our government he says "Satan, blushing, owns himself outdone in the work of deception."---(p. 12) Our first magistrate is like a lioness bereaved of her whelps, frantic for blood. The President exhorts "the citizens of Canada to perjure their souls and violate their oaths of allegiance."---(p. 23.)

He represents our rulers as the abject slaves of the French emperor. In his sermon of May 30, 1810, speaking of Napoleon he says, "Already our government is more obedient, than his conquered kings, his ruined vassals. Already they have laid their country on the funeral pile with other nations; they have pierced the vitals of its prosperity, as a peace offering to the baleful demon."---(p. 21, 22.) All our calamities rise from the friendship of our government to their haughty master. (p. 24.) Had they sold themselves, had they sworn to destroy their country, would they dare to perform more than they have?---(p. 23.)

As to the war, he says in his sermon of July 12, 1812, "The wicked archives of all the wicked governments from Macedonian's madman to the Swede, furnish no parallel to this profligate measure."---(p. 21.) In his sermon of April 8, 1813, he adds, it is "a licentious outrage on all the principles of christianity, an impious abandonment of divine protection."---(p. 5.) The nation has taken the sword in a wicked, wanton manner.---(p. 7.) In the first onset, moral principle was set at defiance; the laws of God and hopes of man were utterly disdained. Vice threw off her veil, and crimes were decked with the highest honors. This war not only tolerates crimes, but calls for them, demands them. Crimes are the food of its life, the arms of its strength.---(p. 11.) The late declaration of war will be recorded among the wonders of history. The story of Herod destroying all the babes of Bethlehem, will give place to this more enormous iniquity. The wickedness bearing the strongest resemblance to that of our government is that of Nero."---(p. 22.)

Not content with denouncing the war, he condemns its supporters to disgrace and ruin in this world and eternal

misery in the next. In his sermon of July 23, 1812, he says, "If you commence the war, you understandingly abandon your independence and your freedom.—p. 12. The present war is offensive on our part. Every person slain, enemy or friend, is murdered, and his blood falls on us."—p. 18.

In his sermon of April 8, 1813, he again says, "Every man who falls in the war, by the sword or disease, is a murdered man. The legislators, who declared the war, must answer at the bar of Almighty justice for every life which is sacrificed, for every tear of the widow, for every sigh of the orphan. The assailing army in such a war are so many legions of murderers. All the citizens who are in any way active, are murderers. All those who pray for the success of such a war, mingle impetly with blood. All the people who approve of this war, though they may be by their fire sides, are murderers in their hearts.—p. 4. Let every man who sanctions this war by his suffrage or influence, remember that he is laboring to cover himself with blood.—p. 23. How will the supporters of this Antichristian warfare endure their sentence, endure their own reflections, endure the fire that forever burns, the worm which never dies, the hosannas of Heaven, while the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever?"—p. 24.

The officers of our army are represented as the vilest of miscreants. He says, "The generals of our forces are neither restrained by moral principle, nor discouraged by the wickedness of their cause; neither anxious whether they carry havoc and ruin into peaceable provinces, or sacrifice their own armies.—p. 10. The courage of our army is the fury of the assassin—if our army fall on the field, they are like Ahab bleeding in the field of Naboth—they are wolves falling in the fold of the shepherd."—p. 22.

He grossly misrepresents facts. In his sermon of July 23, 1812, speaking of our divisions upon the question of war, he says, "The contest is between Christ and Antichrist, between Almighty God and atheistic power"—p. 10—and in these parts [New-England] few are for Antichrist, perhaps one in a thousand.—p. 11. "The general government cannot provide any reasonable defence. They cannot raise men; they cannot borrow money."—p. 21.

He endeavors to excite the people of the eastern States to rebel, to dissolve the federal government, and dismember

the Union. In his sermon of July 23, 1812, he says, "Already it is high time, that petitions and remonstrances should be laid aside. You have thrown away enough by sending them to the *Polomac*, to form carpets for her palaces. Go and petition the grave to close her gates and admit no more of your dear friends.---p. 13. The authors of this war have not a fibre of sympathy with your dearest interest; their course is destructive to your prosperity; their attachments ingulph you in ruin. Will you then throw yourselves completely in their power, by suffering this warfare to proceed? Will you admit southern troops into your borders?---p. 14. You have patiently demonstrated that feeling, and whining, and petitioning, and feebly resisting, will redress no grievances, will prevent no evils, will command no attention, but scorn and derision, and accumulated insults, and increasing privations. Of these you have already had enough to satisfy any man's conscience. Pause then--consider--form your imamutable resolution--what is the result?---p. 15. Do what is infinitely easy; let there be no war in your territories, proclaim an honorable neutrality. Let southern heroes fight their own battles. Rise in the majesty of your unconquerable strength, burst these chains under which you have sullenly murmured, during the long, long reign of democracy.---p. 16.

"Send to the miserable people of *Turkey*; send to the *banditti of Tunis and Algiers*, invite the abject creatures of those nations to come and study the science of slavery in New-England. They have never endured such wanton, capricious abuse; such useless, inconsistent vexations. Here you may teach them something new in the history of slaves.---p. 16, 17. Protest did I say--protest? Forbid this war to proceed in New-England.---p. 17. The Puritans of New-England must not, will not, cannot be dragged into this execrable war."---p. 21.

Again he says, 'This is a war in obedience to France--'tis not against Britain, "but really a declaration of war against New-England. This nefarious declaration of war is nothing more nor less, than a license given by a *Virginia vassal* of a French emperor to the English nation authorising them in legal form to destroy the prosperity of New-England. This is the grand design, and chief expectation of the government." In his sermon of the 8th April, 1813, he says, "God forbid that the sons of New-England should

enlist in the war of atheism against christianity ; this war of vice against virtue ; this war of atheism against the prince of peace. This impious war places us in the ranks of Antichrist.---p 22. Do not, I beseech you, do not move a finger to promote this wicked war."---p. 24.

But not satisfied with charging our rulers with crimes, at which demons ought to blush, he adds, the evils we suffer proceed from our own government. and the blessings we enjoy from our enemies. In his sermon of July 1812, he declares *Our security arises from the forbearance, clemency and magnanimity of the English, and not from our own government* ---p. 21. April 11, 1811, he says, " All our calamities rise from the friendship of our government to their haughty master [Napoleon.]---p. 24. And April 8, 1813, he adds, " Though our government, not the people, rush forward with the torch of war blazing in their hands, the English are determined to give the contest every feature of *mildness and humanity* which the nature of the case will admit."---p. 22.

Can you *approve* of these horrid doctrines which Mr. Parish inculcates?---doctrines whose natural tendency is to excite a spirit of opposition and rebellion against the constituted authority of your country---to destroy our Union and dissolve its government, and produce the worst of evils, *civil war* in our happy land? Can such doctrines proceed from HIM who is the *God of order and not of confusion*, and who requires his children to be *subject to the powers that be, for they are ordained of God?*

A LAYMAN.

December 20, 1813.

NO. 4.

REVEREND GENTLEMEN,

IT is necessary that I should now consider the positive duties which the Christian religion enjoins upon its disciples, and particularly its teachers, towards the civil government of the country in which they reside. and compare those duties with your conduct. To ascertain those duties is not a difficult task. To discover them, it is not necessary to study the fathers, consult the records of councils ancient or mod-

ern, or acquire a knowledge of Hebrew or Greek. All that is requisite is to open your Bibles---there they are expressed in language so plain, that *he that runs may read*, and if not blinded by prejudice may clearly understand them.

JESUS CHRIST, when on earth, was accused by his enemies of setting himself up as a king, and aspiring to the throne of the *Cæsars*. He was indeed a king---he never disclaimed that title ; but he was not an *earthly*, but *spiritual* king. He most explicitly declared, “ My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered unto the Jews, but now is my kingdom not from hence.”---John xviii. 36. His practice, unlike some of his professed disciples, strictly and literally corresponded with his profession : hence when the Roman government, which then extended over Judæa, demanded taxes, he not only enjoined it upon his disciples to “ Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s,” but wrought a miracle to obtain money to pay his own tribute. Matt. xvii. 24---27 ; xxii. 21. His first disciples, like the mass of their countrymen, believed that the Messiah was to be a temporal prince and deliverer ; but he soon taught them that his mission into this world was not to give them power and place here, but to prepare them, by their faith, their good works and sufferings in this, *for another and better world*---and that the *weapons of their warfare* were not carnal but spiritual.

The great duty which he and his inspired Apostles inculcated upon Christians, was to consider this world not as their home---that they were travellers and sojourners to another country or city *whose founder and builder was God*---and that in relation to civil government they were bound to yield obedience to it, as rulers were established by God in his Providence to protect, defend and secure the civil rights of man. Hence Paul says, “ Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, *for there is no power but of God : the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation*---for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good and thou shalt have praise of the same, for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain:

for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake : for this cause pay ye tribute also, for they are God's ministers attending continually upon this very thing : render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor."

—Rom. xiii. 1—7. And when writing to Titus one of the preachers, giving him instructions what doctrines to teach the people, he particularly directs him to "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man." Tit. iii, 1--2

Peter enforces the same wholesome doctrine. "Submit yourselves (says he) to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governor, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well, *for so is the will of God*, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."—1st Pet. ii, 13—15.

How very different is this doctrine of the Bible from that of your present leaders, Messrs. *Osgood* and *Parish*, as recited in the two preceding numbers ! The one inculcates obedience and submission ; the other exhorts to opposition, to insurrection and rebellion to the civil government of the country. There is also another remarkable difference in the two cases that ought not to be omitted. At the time when Christ and his Apostles exhorted the Christian Jews to respect and obey the civil rulers of their country, they were then not only under the government of a *foreign* but an arbitrary and tyrannical despot. When Paul wrote, Nero the vilest Roman Emperor *that ever disgraced the purple*, ruled over Judea, and was the open, avowed and bitter enemy of the Christian religion. But now, instead of foreigners, imposed by a foreign court, bearing rule in our happy land, our rulers owe their elevation to the free suffrages of the great mass of our people, elected for short periods, answerable to the people for their conduct, and subject themselves in common with their fellow citizens to the good & the evil effects of their official measures. If Paul was in duty bound to exhort his fellow Christians to obey even a *NERO*, because he was a *magistrate*, how can you answer it to your

God, to your conscience, or to your country, to spend your time and talents in exciting your people, not only to distrust, but to acts of insurrection and rebellion against a free elective government?

The Bible not only teaches obedience to government, but it denounces those who revile and resist rulers. It says, "Thou shalt not revile the judges, nor curse the ruler of thy people."—Deut. xxiii. 2—5. And when Paul was brought before Ananias the high priest (who had a portion of civil power) he ordered man to strike Paul on the mouth. "Paul said to him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall, for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to law?" But when Paul was asked if he reviled God's high priest, what was his answer?—did he justify such language to a ruler? No—his only excuse was that he *did not know that he was the high priest*. "I wist not, says he, brethren, that he was the high priest, for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the rulers of thy people."—Acts xxiii. 2—5. The excuse of ignorance you cannot make—you know your rulers, yet you revile them, you slander them in language so coarse and vulgar as to disgrace not only the christian but the gentleman.

In the Apostle's days there were men who seem to have pursued a similar course against the government of their country that you have against ours. Hear the Apostle's rebuke to them, and decide for yourselves how far it is applicable to your case. Peter says, "Presumptuous are they, self willed, they are not afraid to *speak evil of dignities*: whereas Angels which are greater in power and might bring not a railing accusation against them before the Lord; but these as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, *speak evil of things they understand not*, & shall utterly perish in their own destruction."—2d Pet. ii. 10--12. Jude says, "These filthy dreamers despise the flesh, despise dominion, and *speak evil of dignities*, yet Michael the archangel when contending with the Devil about the body of Moses, durst not bring a railing accusation, but said the Lord will rebuke thee, but these *speak evil of those things which they know not*."—Jude 8—10.

You appear to have adopted the same course against the government of your country, which certain Jews did against the prophet (Jer. xviii. 18) to smite with the tongue. But remember, I beseech you, *that the tongue is a world of iniquity—an unruly member and full of deadly poison.*—

James iii. 5—8 The *sin of the tongue* was one of the evils that David was anxious to avoid. And should you survive the *spirit of party feelings*, and those party feelings that now govern you, it will then afford you little real satisfaction to reflect that your sermons have weakened our government, injured our country and given aid and countenance to their enemies. Some of your sermons have been re-published with applause in Canada in their gazettes.

He who does not possess the *amor patriæ* is a cold blooded man, and cannot be esteemed virtuous. It was the exclamation of an ancient Jewish patriot respecting his country—"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning---If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."---Psalms cxxxvii. 5---6.

A LAYMAN.

December 27, 1843.

NO. 5.

REVEREND GENTLEMEN,

I HEAR many of you often and loudly complaining of the loss of your influence and want of patronage. These privations you attribute to the prevalence of vice and irreligion in the people; and not to your own demerits. It is natural for man to exculpate himself; but he ought never to attempt that to the injury or at the expence of others. I think you may impute your loss of influence and want of patronage more to your own improper conduct, than to the wickedness of the people.

If your conduct was prudent and in conformity to the injunctions of the religion you profess, you could have no cause, in this country, to complain that you had not a due share of influence in society. There is, perhaps, no order of men that possess equal means of influence with you. The very duties of your profession, and your relative situations in life, have a natural tendency to acquire and preserve a great influence over your fellow men. The nature of your office necessarily connects you with the people, in the most important concerns of human life. In infancy, you administer the ordinance of baptism---in more mature life you cel-

celebrate the nuptial rights---have free access to our chambers in the hours of sickness and of death---perform our funeral obsequies---and in every stage of our existence you come to us in the important character of *ambassadors of Christ*, and excite our hopes and alarm our fears in relation to the future and eternal world. And to render this situation still more influential, you have salaries settled on you during your ministry, which exempt you from most of the disputes and controversies that usually attend men of business. Thus circumstanced, if your lives were as virtuous and your conduct as prudent as your office requires, what could prevent your having as much influence upon society as you ought to have?

But if it was your object, to dry up the sources of that influence, what course more *fatally certain* could you adopt, than to enlist yourselves as *political partisans*, and with unblushing effrontery accuse our rulers with being more cruel than *Herod*---more tyrannical than *Nero*---and as *harmonizing with DEVILS*! When you advance such charges against the men of our choice, so repugnant to the doctrines of Christianity, so variant to the opinions and so grating to the feelings of many of your parishioners, can you rationally expect to maintain your influence over us? Such a course of conduct instead of conciliating is disgusting, and if pertinaciously persisted in, may lead them to treat you with coldness, with neglect and even contempt. And let me request you seriously to consider, if there is not danger that some of your people may be thus insensibly led to transfer their contempt of you to the religion you profess, and so that sacred cause be *wounded in the house of its professed friends*? The people selected you as their *spiritual* guides and instructors, not as their *political* teachers, much less to calumniate, to slander and to vilify the men whom they have elected as civil rulers. But have you not reason to fear that such conduct may materially affect your livings? Can you rationally expect that men will long continue to support those who vilify the very men to whom they have committed the administration of their invaluable government? Do you believe that men who consider the present war just and necessary, will pay salaries to support ministers who denounce them as murderers who approve of the war, though only at their fire sides? Will men hire you to wound their feelings, abuse their friends

and aid their enemies and those of their country, by your seditious discourses? No. Christian charity, though it may suffer long, has its limits. Duty and interest seem therefore alike to require of you a different procedure.

Permit me to mention other considerations that ought to dissuade you from speaking evil of the rulers of your people. You are by custom, though not by law, exempted from contributing to the support of government. You pay no part of the monies that are raised for either State, county, town, school or highway taxes; yet you enjoy in common with other people all the benefits resulting from them. A common share of *modesty* ought to restrain men thus *favoured* from bringing *railing accusations* against that government, which exempts them from its burthens, whilst it allows them to enjoy its privileges.

Many, very many of you, and particularly those who live in country towns, are not remarkably well qualified to judge correctly of political men and their measures. The great object of your studies when you were in academies and at college, was to acquire some knowledge of Hebrew, Greek and Latin. The most you obtained, and some of you retain very little of that, was the knowledge of *words*, and not the knowledge that those Hebrews, Greeks and Latins had of *things*. The study of *mere words* is a study not calculated to extend the ideas or enlarge the views of the scholar. By the time your collegiate education thus closed, a very great proportion of you expended all the property you had, or your parents could with propriety advance you. To acquire subsistence was your next consideration, and after performing for a few months the part of a pedagogue and reading with a clergyman, you commenced preachers yourselves. Cautious and reserved in your manners, your presence imposes a restraint upon the company, so that you seldom mingle with the world. The world cannot be read in books---a thorough knowledge of it can be obtained only by a thorough acquaintance with itself. Thus circumstanced you are not only excluded from the real knowledge of the world; but even your books are *few* in number, and those few almost altogether confined to divinity. You read little in history, still less in civil polity---and most of the information you obtain of the proceedings of the government of your country is from some one newspaper, whose columns are devoted to opposition. Some years since the Bos-

ton Palladium, an opposition paper, was sent to many clergymen gratis. This is not an exaggerated statement--it is a true portrait, faithfully sketched from the real life. Under such circumstances, I ask you is it right, is it prudent for you to judge and condemn the rulers of your country? But you have done it, and that without hearing the party whom you condemn. Is not this judging an important matter *before you hear it?*

In the whole course of this business you seem to have deviated from the duties of the clerical office, and instead of devoting all your time and talents, as you ought, to the care of souls, have become political partisans, and used carnal instead of spiritual weapons---'The union of church and state, is an unnatural and antichristian connection; it can only render "good christians bad statesmen, and convert political knaves into pretended christians" The christian religion is not allied to the powers of earth---its kingdom is not of this world- .it seeks not for state aggrandizement. "Its hopes, its powers, and its pretensions are of another world." But your anxiety to obtain this alliance, affords too much evidence of your attachment to worldly riches and honors, and too little reliance on the rewards of another life---and has induced many to fear that there are clergymen who adopt preaching as a trade to obtain money. It is not for me to decide whether these fears are well grounded; your own consciences can furnish the answer.

You may accuse me with being the enemy of the church; but the accusation is groundless. Railing is not reasoning, and calling hard names is not proof---they are a mean address to the meanest passions of the human heart. 'Tis not to you or your professions that I am opposed---'tis your aberrations from the duties of that profession, of which I complain. These I consider as alike fatal to genuine religion and the political rights of my country. And in relation to them both, too many, I fear, of our fellow men may exclaim, *Our teachers have caused us to err from the right way.*

A LAYMAN.

Dec. 29, 1844.

NO. 6.

REVEREND GENTLEMEN,

I SHOULD not at this time have resumed my pen, had not a writer recently published a series of numbers in *your* defence, and written professedly in reply to my addresses. Almost all that writer has advanced is foreign to the subject, and contains no answer to the serious charges I exhibited against you of opposing and reviling our rulers, but leaves in full force and unanswered the plenary evidence I then adduced in support of those charges. His doctrine and statements upon the British orders in Council, impressment of seamen, and the right of expatriation, are of this kind. If that writer's doctrines on these subjects were legal, and his statements founded in fact, which is not the case, still they cannot justify you in opposing and reviling the rulers of our country, and in palliating and vindicating the wrongs of our enemy.

But that writer attempts to vindicate you on the authority of scripture. He says some of the ancient prophets denounced and condemned the Israelitish rulers: and the inference he draws from that fact is, that you are justified in your opposition to the rulers of our nation. This argument merits your serious attention. The first question is, are the cases analagous? for if they are not, the argument affords you no justification. I have no hesitation in saying that the Israelitish government and their prophets are in every respect *dissimilar* to the government of the United States, and the American christian clergy. The government of the Israelites was a *theocracy*---their laws were made by God himself; but the government of the United States is *republican*, and rulers elected by the people make our laws. There is therefore no analogy between the two governments. The Israelitish *prophets* were divinely *inspired* by God, and expressly commanded by HIM, at certain times and on particular occasions to denounce the wickedness and tyranny of particuar rulers. But you are not *prophets*---you are not endowed with divine *inspiration*. None but furious fanatics and wild enthusiasts, and but even few of them, now pretend to that immediate and infallible inspiration that the ancient prophets possessed. The *lay* of inspiration terminated with the completion of the sacred books. There is therefore no analogy between you

and the prophets of Israel. And until you evince your claim to be *prophets*, endowed with immediate inspiration from God, and possessed of supernatural knowledge like those ancient prophets of Israel, you cannot justify your conduct by citing theirs. As well might a private citizen assume the right to make and execute laws, or a private soldier to exercise the authority of a commander in chief, as for you to justify yourselves by the conduct of ancient prophets whose character and authority you never either claimed or possessed.

Reasoning from analogy is often inconclusive and unsafe; but to consider cases as analagous that are not so, necessarily leads to gross and fatal errors. Permit me to illustrate this position by a strong example. The most eminent prophets in Israel were raised up for temporal princes and temporal deliverers—such were Moses, Joshua, Samuel and others. From this fatal source of reasoning from analogy, the Jews were induced to expect the Messiah would be *like unto Moses* and their other great prophets, a *temporal deliverer*. Hence when the Messiah appeared, and declared *his kingdom was not of this world*, the Jews not only denied his authority, and rejected his doctrine, but condemned and crucified him as a malefactor.

The *new testament* gives no intimation that Christ or his inspired apostles ever censured or condemned, much less reviled, any person whom they knew to be a civil ruler in the country in which they lived. Though their nation was then subject to a foreign, arbitrary and despotic government, yet instead of reviling those rulers, they never interfered with their concerns, further than to submit themselves, and to enjoin obedience upon their followers, to the powers that existed. They did not enquire whether the Ruler was such *de jure*---if he was so *de facto*, they considered him entitled to obedience and respect. They did not consider it their business to regulate or control the civil government of this world. You surely cannot be at a loss for the reason of their conduct on this occasion. It proceeded from the very nature of their religion---a religion, the vital principle of which was to qualify men, not of one nation, but of all countries, for another but unchanging world. Hence, the weapons of their warfare were not carnal, but spiritual.

But how different from this has been your conduct for

several years past ? With what zeal and anxiety have you labored with *political partisans* ? And what a spirit of opposition and contempt have you instilled into the minds of too many of your people against our Rulers. your own consciences as well as thousands of your hearers can testify. Is this conduct congenial with the religion of Christ ? Is it imitating his example, or that of the apostles ? Has not your conduct a direct and powerful tendency to injure the cause of religion, and eventually to destroy your usefulness as religious instructors ? You were selected by your congregations for the purpose of preaching religion, not politics: the latter is foreign from your business. & reviling & abusing your rulers still more so. If a preacher should devote a portion of his prayers and sermons to teaching the sciences, mathematics, the mechanical arts, commerce and agriculture, would he answer the end for which he was ordained a teacher ? And yet those subjects are more congenial with religion, and less dangerous to the peace of society, than reviling civil rulers. Paul considered the duties of a christian teacher so numerous and so highly important, that he enjoined Timothy to "give himself wholly to them." Have those duties become less in number and importance, than they were in Timothy's time, so as to enable you to divide your time and attention betwixt religion and politics ? You will not, I presume, pretend that your talents and information so far exceed his, that you have sufficient time to serve two masters, God and mammon. You profess great respect for the New Testament---you consider it as a perfect rule for your faith and practice ; but does it contain one political discourse ?

If you disregard the friendly admonitions of a *layman*, read and consider the opinion of one of your own profession, a British clergyman. "Preaching," says he, "should not be made an engine for furthering the purposes of the faction of the day. Nothing can be more injurious to the true interests of the church than to mingle its name with the political feeling of the day, and to lend its authority to any purpose of individual ambition. If it is done by one party in politics, it will soon be imitated by another ; we shall then become a mere tool to answer the purposes of two opposite factions ; and the dearest interests of mankind

will be sacrificed to the vilest purposes. This is the true way. first to disgrace a church establishment ; and then, when it has incurred universal contempt, to destroy it."

A LAYMAN.

March 31, 1814.



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